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From the Editors

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Lauren Fitzgerald and Melissa lanetta

[T]eaching, at its best, means not only transmitting knowledge, but transforming and extending it as well. Through reading, through classroom discussion, and surely through comments and questions posed by students, professors themselves will be pushed in creative new directions. . . . What we urgently need today is a more inclusive view of what it means to be a scholar—a recognition that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice, and through teaching.

—Ernest Boyer (24)

In *Scholarship Reconsidered*, Ernest Boyer urges an understanding of scholarly work that moves beyond academe’s fetishization of discovery—that oft-romanticized model of creation that has long comprised the stock-and-trade of the professoriate. By contrast, Boyer calls for a notion of scholarship that acknowledges the multiple modes of knowledge-making, including integration, his term for those methods that draw together extant information to create new ideas, and those kinds of knowledge created in the doing, which he describes as the scholarship of application and teaching.

Boyer’s work was in our thoughts as we edited this issue, for through the diversity of offerings, we believe it testifies eloquently to the utility of his argument. In the lead article, for example, “Addressing the Everyday Language of Oppression in the Writing Center,” this issue’s Theory In/To Practice feature, Mandy Suhr-Sytsma and Shan-Estelle Brown demonstrate clearly how teaching and scholarly reflection on it are at the root of writing center studies. In the

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description of their center's strategies to combat racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of oppression, they illustrate our field's twofold commitment to the scholarship of teaching, for not only do they talk about their work to teach tutors and writers about everyday oppression, but they also model the ways in which the writing center community as a whole learns from its individual members' experiences as both the oppressed and unwitting oppressors. We too, as readers and editors of this essay, experience the scholarship of teaching, for we learned much about improving our understanding and our centers' accessibility.

As we turn to Sarah Liggett, Kerri Jordan, and Steve Price's "Mapping Knowledge-Making in Writing Center Research: A Taxonomy of Methodologies," we turn, too, from Boyer's scholarship of teaching to the scholarship of integration. In this essay, the authors taxonomize research methods of writing center studies and, as a result, provide us with a "powerful tool to generate critical thinking, helping us to classify, critique, and retrieve knowledge," drawing together a rich array of research from our field in order to help the reader better understand the ways in which we make knowledge and the kinds of questions each method best answers. In so doing, Liggett, Jordan, and Price not only validate Boyer's argument for the need for such research but also speak to writing center scholars' ever-increasing need for more precise understandings of methodology.

While the first essay in this issue helps us understand the workings of our centers and the second helps us better understand our development as a field, in "Learning and Leading through Conflicted Collaborations," Roberta Kjesrud and Mary Wislocki provide a fine example of the scholarship of application as it relates to our administrative work as writing center advocates and ambassadors. As Kjesrud and Wislocki review the evolution of the conversations coalescing around our field's ideas of collaboration and conflict resolution, they offer "ideas for growing and leading through institutional conflict." By giving us new ways to think about these long-vexing, long-discussed issues, they remind us that this work, too, is research.

It seems to us, then, that this issue of *WCJ* evidences that writing center studies is built upon the values Boyer espoused over twenty

years ago—and which many institutions have adopted since. Not that we wish to pigeonhole any of the articles in these pages or appearing elsewhere in our field. Like the works reviewed in this issue by Kevin Davis (Michael Mattison’s *Centered: A Year in the Life of a Writing Center Director*), Terese Thonus (*ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors*, 2nd ed., edited by Shanti Bruce and Ben Rafoth), and Jackie Grutsch McKinney and Emily Standridge (Beth Hewitt’s *The Online Writing Conference: A Guide for Teachers and Tutors*), these articles draw from and speak to multiple modes described in Boyer’s work. Here, too, we learn from Boyer, who has affirmed that “these four categories—the scholarship of discovery, of integration, of application, and of teaching—divide intellectual functions that are tied inseparably to each other” (24-25). Rather, we believe that looking at writing center studies through the Boyer model demonstrates that this field enacts multimodal inquiry that is immeasurably enriched by the diversity of perspectives that comprise our conversation—and we do believe that other fields could learn from our strengths!

WORK CITED

Boyer, Ernest L. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. 1990. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997. Print.